

**MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS**

**JUNE 9, 2009**

Home to more than 700,000 residents, the Compton Creek Watershed drains a highly urbanized 42.1 square miles of the Los Angeles River Watershed within the City of Los Angeles, the City of Compton and the unincorporated Willowbrook community. While a segment of the Creek has retained a natural river bottom, the majority of the waterway has been paved with concrete and the surrounding lands have been almost completely developed. As a result, recreational opportunities in the surrounding communities and along the Creek are limited, water quality is degraded, water conservation opportunities have not been realized and open space and natural resources, such as plant and wildlife, have been greatly reduced. For example, while minimum County standards for urban park space are four acres for every thousand persons, the Compton Creek watershed falls drastically below that standard with only 0.6 acres of park per one thousand persons. Furthermore, illegal dumping, blight, graffiti and non-point source pollution remains an ongoing policy challenge that adversely affect the surrounding community.

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**MOTION**

MOLINA \_\_\_\_\_

RIDLEY-THOMAS \_\_\_\_\_

YAROSLAVSKY \_\_\_\_\_

ANTONOVICH \_\_\_\_\_

KNABE \_\_\_\_\_

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The County Flood Control District and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have expressed a concern that in the wake of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's mandated levee certification program, the Compton Creek levy system must be upgraded or an unmitigated flood risk to the lower reach of the Creek may arise. A plan to better understand current flood control capacity and flood risk in the area is essential for public safety and the economic viability of the surrounding community.

The County Flood Control District, in partnership with other County agencies including the Departments of Parks and Recreation and Regional Planning, have already successfully established major planning efforts for the Los Angeles River and the San Gabriel River. These two efforts have resulted in successful implementation of key priority projects, and have leveraged millions of dollars of investment for multi-use trails, parks, bike paths and other greenway access points on the rivers and in the surrounding communities.

Stakeholders in the Compton Creek Watershed have completed the Compton Creek Master Plan (2006) and the Watts Watershed Action Plan (2009), which have begun identifying strategies to improve water quality and enhance recreational opportunities along the Creek. Recognizing that Compton Creek and its surrounding areas can serve as a valuable educational, recreational, public health and economic asset within a park-poor area of the County, there is an essential role for the County in coordinating emerging efforts and developing a shared vision and plan for this watershed.

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The Los Angeles County Flood Control District, in conjunction with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, other federal, state and local agencies and stakeholders, has the capability and authority to initiate a flood control recertification effort and a master planning process for the Compton Creek and its watershed. This process – similar to that occurring along the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers – can encompass multiple benefits including flood protection, ecosystem restoration, water quality, water conservation, and recreational and open space opportunities, including trails, green belts and parks leading to and along Compton Creek. This Plan should integrate goals established by the many jurisdictions and stakeholders that share the Creek and, through a consensus-based process, solicit the support and input of local stakeholders, including all of the cities and agencies within the Compton Creek Watershed, the Los Angeles and San Gabriel River Watershed Council, the Compton Creek Task Force, the Baldwin Hills Regional Conservation Authority, the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, the California State Coastal Conservancy, the Mountains and Rivers Conservation Authority and other community stakeholders.

**I THEREFORE MOVE, THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

- Direct the Department of Public Works to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the County of Los Angeles Departments of Parks and Recreation, Public Health, and Regional Planning, and other jurisdictions within the

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Compton Creek Watershed, including the Cities of Compton, Los Angeles and Long Beach, and the other aforementioned stakeholders, to develop an

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Inter-Governmental Coordination Committee that is tasked with developing a Master Compton Creek Ecosystem Restoration and Implementation Plan. The Plan should use plans and studies previously developed for Compton Creek and identify and recommend immediate, mid and long-term opportunities and priorities. This Plan should incorporate multiple-benefit opportunities including flood protection, water quality and water conservation improvements, reduction of blight, illegal dumping and non-point source pollution, recreation opportunities and restoration of natural resources. The Committee should report back to the Board within 60 days with a description of project management, governance, budget, and a timeline that facilitates inter-agency cooperation and maximize opportunities for soliciting Federal, State and grant funding for the development and implementation of future projects.

While this effort will be vital to realizing a shared vision for the Creek, we should also be working with our Federal counterparts to ensure that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has available staffing and resources to contribute to this planning effort and to the development of a Compton Creek Ecosystem Restoration Study.

**I FURTHER MOVE, THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

Direct the Chief Executive Officer to send a five-signature letter from the Board of Supervisors to urge the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to initiate a Compton Creek Ecosystem Restoration Study with the Los Angeles County Flood Control District

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serving as the lead local agency for this Study, and send copies of this letter to the members of Los Angeles' Federal Congressional delegation, as well as to the elected officials and city managers from the Cities of Compton, Los Angeles and Long Beach whose jurisdictions lie within the Compton Creek Watershed, in order to solicit their support.

- Direct our Federal legislative advocates to work with our Congressional delegation to secure a line item within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Budget to ensure that resources are available for the Compton Creek Ecosystem Restoration Study.

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